

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 2342

NODIS

DEPT PLS PASS PRESIDENT'S PARTY FOR SECRETARY VANCE FROM
DEPCSEC CHRISTOPHER

DEPT FOR TARNOFF

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, OVIP, TU(CHRISTOPHER, WARREN)
SUBJ: FIRST MEETING WITH TURKISH PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT

1. SUMMARY: MY IMPRESSION IS THAT THE OPENING SESSION WITH
ECEVIT WENT WELL. HE WAS PLEASED BY PRESIDENT'S LETTER AND
IMPRESSED THAT OUR PROPOSALS HAD BEEN CAREFULLY
CONSIDERED PERSONALLY BY THE PRESIDENT AND HIS SENIOR
ADVISORS. HE ASKED SEARCHING QUESTIONS ABOUT REVISIONS
IN OUR APPROACH, BUT THERE WERE NO EXPLOSIONS AND NO
OBVIOUS BITTERNESS. HE RECOGNIZED, I BELIEVE, THAT OUR
PROPOSALS REFLECT OUR BEST JUDGEMENT OF WHAT IS FEASIBLE
IN LIGHT OF ALL RELEVANT FACTORS. WHILE I EMPHASIZED THAT
PRESIDENT IS PREPARED TO GO AHEAD WITH PROPOSALS, I BELIEVE
HE ACCEPTS IMPORTANCE OF MOVEMENT ON CYPRUS AS NECESSARY
TO ENHANCE CONGRESSIONAL PROSPECTS. HE HAS ASKED
TO SEE ME AT 5:30 PM. END SUMMARY.

2. IN PRIVATE MEETING WITH ECEVIT, I STRESSED THAT
THE PRESIDENT, THE VICE PRESIDENT, HAROLD BROWN,
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ZBIG BRZEZINSKI AND YOU HAD PERSONALLY BEEN INVOLVED
IN A LENGTHY REVIEW OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH TURKEY.
THIS CULMINATED IN OUR MEETING ON MONDAY, AFTER
WHICH THE PRESIDENT HAD ASKED ME TO DEPART THAT
EVENING TO BRIEF THE PRIME MINISTER AND HAD GIVEN
ME A LETTER. ECEVIT READ THE LETTER AND SEEMED PLEASED.

3. I STRESSED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S GOAL IS TO RESUME THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE US-TURKEY RELATIONSHIP. I PICKED UP AN EXPRESSION WHICH ECEVIT HAD USED THAT OUR DUAL OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE TO "REVITALIZE" THE RELATIONSHIP AND SAID THAT WAS EXACTLY OUR INTENTION AS WELL. I STRESSED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT AN ARRAY OF FACTORS AND HAD TO EVALUATE THE SENTIMENT IN CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC. THE PRESIDENT HAD JUST COME THROUGH A DIFFICULT DEBATE IN THE SENATE ON THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY. I ADMITTED THAT REASONABLE MEN MAY DIFFER ON WHAT WAS THE APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL STRATEGY, BUT THE PRESIDENT HAD MADE DECISIONS WHICH HE INTENDED TO PRESS ACTIVELY IN THE CONGRES.

4. ECEVIT AND I THEN JOINED THE OTHERS. I REPEATED MUCH OF THE SAME PREAMBULAR REMARKS AND THEN OUTLINED THE FOUR-POINT PACKAGE ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

A) AT THE HEARINGS PRESENTLY SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 6 WE WILL RECOMMEND THAT CONGRESS LIFT THE EMBARGO RESTRICTIONS ON TURKEY. I EXPLAINED BRIEFLY THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THAT STEP FOR TURKEY;

B) WE WILL SEEK CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF A DOLLARS FIFTY MILLION SECURITY SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE LOAN FOR TURKEY IN FY-1979; ON THIS POINT, I STRESSED CONFIDENTIAL

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SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE AS WELL AS PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE.

C) WE WILL MAINTAIN OUR REQUEST FOR DOLLARS 175 MILLION IN FOREIGN MILITARY SALES CREDITS FOR FY-1979;

D) WE BELIEVE THE MARCH 1976 DCA SHOULD BE RENEGOTIATED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF 1978 REALITIES. I EMPHASIZED THAT THE DCA IS OUTMODED IN VARIOUS ASPECTS, AND THAT FOUR YEAR DURATION PRESENTS MAJOR OBSTACLES.

5. ECEVIT HEARD ME OUT FULLY AND ASKED A NUMBER OF POINTED QUESTIONS. HE PARTICULARLY SOUGHT TO LEARN OUR THINKING ON WHY WE BELIEVED IT WOULD BE EASIER IN CONGRESS TO LIFT THE EMBARGO THAN IT WOULD BE TO SECURE APPROVAL OF THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT. HE NOTED THAT SENATOR JAVITS HAD TOLD HIM A FEW DAYS AGO JUST THE OPPOSITE AND THAT A MJORITY OF THE HIRC HAD SENT TWO LETTERS TO THE DEPARTMENT INDICATING THAT THEY WERE PREPARED TO MOVE ON THE TURKISH DCA IF THE PRESIDENT ASKED FOR IT. I REPLIED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION TOOK FULLY INTO ACCOUNT ALL OF THE RELEVANT

POLITICAL AND OTHER FACTORS AND REPRESENTED OUR BEST JUDGMENT OF THE SITUATION. THERE WAS, I SAID, STRONG SENTIMENT IN THE CONGRESS TO RESTORE A STRONG US-TURKEY RELATIONSHIP BUT THERE WAS ALSO RESISTANCE TO A FOUR-YEAR BILLION DOLLAR OBLIGATION. I ALSO STRESSED THAT I FELT HE WAS CORRECT WHEN HE STATED IN JANUARY THAT WE SHOULD FIRST REMOVE THE "NEGATIVE" EFFECT OF THE EMBARGO, AND THEN PROCEED TO CONSIDER THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE RELATIONSHIP IN LIGHT OF DEVELOPMENTS.

6. ECEVIT ALSO ASKED WHAT WE PLANNED TO DO WITH THE GREEK DCA AND WHETHER ONCE THE RENEGOTIATION OF THE TURKISH AGREEMENT IS COMPLETED, WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO STATE PUBLICLY THAT WE WERE READY TO IMPLEMENT
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AN ARRANGEMENT WITH TURKEY REGARDLESS OF WHAT GREECE DOES. I REPLIED THAT NEW DCA OR REPLACEMENT AGREEMENTS WOULD STAND ON THEIR OWN LEGS.

7. FOLLOWING THE SESSION I AGAIN MET PRIVATELY WITH ECEVIT. I SAID THAT AS A POLITICAL LEADER HE COULD RECOGNIZE THAT THERE WERE SERIOUS PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN WHAT WE WERE ABOUT TO UNDERTAKE BUT THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO GO AHEAD WITH THE PROGRAM. I STRESSED THAT THE PROSPECTS OF OVERCOMING THESE PROBLEMS WERE FRANKLY GREATER IF PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION. THE PRESIDENT'S DETERMINATION TO GO AHEAD WAS NOT CONDITIONAL BUT IN THE REAL WORLD THE CHANCES OF SUCCESS WILL BE MUCH BETTER IF TANGIBLE MOVEMENT ON CYPRUS IS TAKING PLACE. I MENTIONED VAROSHA AS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT POINT FOR MANY PEOPLE IN CONGRESS. ECEVIT REPLIED THAT THEY WOULD NOT MAKE THEIR CYPRUS PRESENTATION TO WALDHEIM UNTIL THE SECOND WEEK IN APRIL BUT THEY WERE PREPARED TO GO FORWARD. ECEVIT STRESSED THAT HE WANTED TO MAKE PROGRESS ON CYPRUS--NOT TO CURRY FAVOR IN THE US--BUT BECAUSE IT WAS IMPORTANT TO TURKISH INTERESTS. HE DID NOT MIND SOME PRESSURE TO MAKE PROGRESS ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION BUT COULD NOT ACCEPT IF IT WAS DONE ONLY TO CURRY FAVOR WITH THE GREEKS. ECEVIT IS SAID TO BE INSCRUTABLE AND UNPREDICTABLE, BUT MY IMPRESSION IS THAT HE WAS REASSURED BY MY PRESENTATION ON THIS POINT.

8. COMMENT: ECEVIT IMPRESSED ME AS A SHREWD AND EXPERIENCED FIGURE WHO CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD WHAT WE WERE TRYING TO DO. IF HE WAS SURPRISED, HE WAS NOT TAKEN ABACK. WHILE THE MEETING WENT WELL, IT IS NOT
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YET POSSIBLE TO GAUGE A CONSIDERED TURKISH GOVERNMENT
REACTION. THAT WILL EMERGE IN OUR FURTHER DISCUSSION
TODAY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER OKCUN AND HIS STAFF BUT
PARTICULARLY WHEN I HAVE A CONCLUDING
SESSION WITH ECEVIT LATE THIS AFTERNOON.
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